

MINUTES
BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION

The meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was held on Tuesday, August 7, 2018, starting in Room #900, Boston City Hall, and beginning at 5:15 p.m.

Members in attendance were: Michael Davis, David Hacin, William Rawn, Paul McDonough, Linda Eastley, Daniel St. Clair, Deneen Crosby, and David Manfredi. Absent were Andrea Leers and Kirk Sykes. Also present was David Carlson, Executive Director of the Commission. Representatives of the BSA were present. Natalie Punzak was present for the BPDA.

The Co-Vice-Chair, Michael Davis (MD), announced that this was the meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission that meets the first Tuesday of every month and welcomed all persons interested in attending. He added thanks to the Commissioners for the contribution of their time to the betterment of the City and its Public Realm. This hearing was duly advertised on Sunday, July 22, in the BOSTON HERALD.

The first item was the approval of the July 10, 2018 Meeting Minutes. A motion was made, seconded, and it was duly

VOTED: To approve the July 10, 2018 BCDC Meeting Minutes.

Votes were passed for signature. MD asked for a report from the Review Committee on the **60 Kilmarnock Street project**. David Carlson (DAC) reported that the proposed redevelopment of six parcels along Kilmarnock and Queensberry streets in the Fenway neighborhood calls for 443 residential units, retail space, and 250 parking spaces. At 420,000 SF, the project well exceeds the BCDC threshold, so a vote to review was recommended. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed 60 Kilmarnock Street Project at the corner of Queensberry Street in the West Fenway neighborhood.

The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the **Hynes House (725-751 Shawmut Avenue) project**. DAC noted that although the proposed project exceeds the BCDC review threshold of 100,000 SF, impacts other than an updated facade cladding will be minimal. There is no change in the building form, program, or site plan; for these reasons, a vote *not* to review was recommended. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission NOT review the schematic design for the proposed 725-751 Shawmut Avenue (Haynes House) Project in Madison Park Village in the Roxbury neighborhood.

The next item was a report from the Design Committee on the **37-43 North Beacon Street Project**. David Snell and David Chilinski of PCA presented project, referred to as Arthaus, and the list of issues addressed and revised through the Design Committee process. Changes included a revised facade design, improved accessibility of the public plaza with hardscape for flexibility, protected street trees, condo entrances off of Sinclair, program of gallery, and revised building massing.

William Rawn (WR): In the most recent Design Committee, these changes were confirmed and supported.

David Manfredi (DM): The team has been very responsive to a number of issues, including the reconfiguration of the condo building.

Deneen Crosby (DC): The only additional comment I would add is to consider activation strategies from the art gallery into the space outside.

With that, and no public comment heard, it was moved, seconded and:

VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for the proposed 37-43 North Beacon Street Project at the corner of Everett Street in the Allston-Brighton neighborhood.

Next was a presentation for the **60 Kilmarnock Street Project**.

Jay Doherty, of Cabot, Cabot & Forbes: The project site is a former taxicab garage. The project aspires to create a mix of mid-rise condominiums and rental units. The team has worked to preserve affordable housing at Newcastle-Saranac as part of the Inclusionary Development Policy requirements for the project.

Philip Casey (PC), Principal at CBT: The site spreads across both sides of Kilmarnock Street, nestled in the Fenway neighborhood. The massing consists of cloistered courtyards for privacy and scale in contrast with commercial rows. The site section depicts the transition from high-rise buildings along Boylston Street, with this project stepping down to the Fens; we propose eight stories of residential and ground-floor commercial use at this site. The project contributes to a network of open spaces and pocket parks and draws on the variety of architectural detail and materiality already existing throughout the neighborhood. The design consists of modules of bays, datums drawn from the neighborhood, and setbacks that respond to the surrounding neighborhood. At the ground floor, retail space is concentrated closer to Peterborough adjacent to “Restaurant Row,” a coveted restaurant space. Retail in this project compliments and hopes to

improve the operations of the restaurants. The roof level will be a programmed green space with residential amenities. The project's parking ratio is just above 0.5.

David Hacin (DH): Does the glazing of the facade closest to Peterborough allow for future development over the existing one-story restaurant?

PC: There is a 10' setback from the property line, and restaurant row is currently built-out to a 0' lot line condition at the rear.

DH: For a project like this we definitely need to see a model to understand the context. I really appreciate the thoughtfulness you've given to the neighborhood's architectural context. The Queensberry elevation feels successful as a contemporary interpretation. I struggle with where the massing is stretching to capture a little more FAR than feels appropriate, at the building bridge connections over alleys. The bridge connection feels hospital-like, and it changes the character from a careful, neighborhood apartment scale to a mega-block. I would encourage you to think about the building on the other side of the alley/restaurants as a little more modest, and with its own access point. Have you had discussion with the restaurant owners about program at the roof of their space? This space will be highly visible to residents--could it be a green roof or civic facade? There should be a service corridor/alley between their building and this project. Without seeing a model, building #3 on the corner of Queensberry on the west side of Kilmarnock feels big, though I appreciate the goal of trying to create something strong at the corner.

PC: Thank you for your thoughts. I think the bridge connection needs some further thought.

DM: I give you a lot of credit for Queensberry Street. The courtyards are appropriate for the residential scale, and the form is sympathetic to the street. While these buildings are taller than the surrounding residential, the rhythm is interpreted in nice modern ways. I am comfortable with the scale on the east side of Kilmarnock Street, but less certain about the facade facing Peterborough. The massing reads as institutional. I had a reaction similar to DH's on the west side of Kilmarnock, but I'm most concerned about this imposing tower corner. Generally I feel very good about the massing and detailing. I recognize the existing condition with the beloved Restaurant Row, but that requires you to think about the side adjacent to these restaurants more carefully, with deft handling as you've done on Queensberry.

DC: The project has nice open spaces and courtyards. When you come back, we need to understand the vocabulary of street trees. The building bridge over the alley bothers me. These should be spaces for informal circulation, and the alley should respond to the character of the neighborhood.

Linda Eastley (LE): I really like that you're picking up on the courtyard experiences. However, it looks like the ground floor is the least interesting part of the composition, and I want it to be the most interesting. What would the street entries be? How does it scale in relation to the public realm? Incorporate more images around the courtyards at Design Committee. We may all be saying something similar in anticipation of future development at Restaurant Row. I agree that it feels there needs to be some separation of a service alley for better access in the future. Show us your thinking.

DH: I'm guessing that the sizes of the restaurant are a function of the egress. If there were a service corridor behind would it allow these buildings to remain?

WR: I'm wondering about the planning implications for this neighborhood more broadly. I always assumed that the Fenway neighborhood supported taller, denser development along Boylston in a civic exchange for protection of the scale, quality, and affordability of the rest of the neighborhood. We need to see a model that includes this scale relationship. I'm not convinced that there are many 6-8 story buildings in the area. Yes, we want to encourage growth, and housing, but do we want to encourage development that is twice as big as its neighbors? Which alleys are public and which are private? Mapping will be important...and if it walks like a duck...I'm not convinced you aren't getting around our (bridge) rules too easily.

MD: I think the civic trade is a pretty fair description of what we have seen on Boylston Street. In the absence of a model, elevation studies, etc., I am not convinced that this proposal is integrated in the neighborhood context. Borrowing language of scale from Boylston on this site concerns me. Of course this project is beautiful, and your renderings are persuasive and exquisite. But we need to look at this in more simple, master planning first. Your diagramming is isolated and we need a broader analysis of the neighborhood.

With that, and hearing no public comment, the **60 Kilmarnock Street Project** was sent to Design Committee.

There being no further items for discussion, a motion was made to adjourn, and the meeting was duly adjourned at 6:16 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was tentatively scheduled for September 4, 2018 [NOTE: Due to a lack of items, the September meeting was cancelled]. The recording of the August 7, 2018 Boston Civic Design Commission meeting was digitized and is available at the Boston Redevelopment Authority.